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Cultural Exchange: Afro Ethnic Tourism in Bahia

Ayana Oforiwah Austin-Depay
SIT Study Abroad

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CULTURAL EXCHANGE: AFRO ETHNIC TOURISM IN BAHIA



(Picture of Mercado Modelo; Photo Taken By Ayana Oforiwah Austin-Depay)

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SIT Brazil
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Abstract

Ethnic tourism is an amalgamation of all the facets within Bahia's society from religion to food to dance. In particular, Afro ethnic tourism, which is the tourism that brings African American tourists to Bahia, thrives on the African American interaction with these facets and most importantly with the Afro Brazilian people. Although it is a great cultural experience, previous research discusses how tourism, and specifically ethnic tourism, is a modern version of imperialism as tourists objectify and romanticize the host country, people, and culture. Additionally, when ethnic tourism is discussed, it is often spoken about in snapshots that capture the external experience of the tourists who indulge in Bahia's beauty and the viewpoint of the Bahian government. Though the research provides a theory that draws on the ethical issues formed in a tourist-host dynamic, it neglects the voice of the Afro-Brazilians whose culture is the foundation of Bahia and the product of this process.

This ethnographic study, with partial auto-ethnographic takes, is mainly focused upon sharing the opinions and sentiments of the Afro-Brazilian women and men in Bahia whose spaces and occupations work jointly with Afro ethnic tourism. The study provides a space for the individuals from the government (Bahiatursa) to explain the importance of Afro ethnic tourism to Salvador and to its Afro-Brazilian people. In order to get an eclectic perspective, the study draws upon the experience of individuals' from/working with Bahiatursa, Ilê Aiyê, Irmandade da Boa Morte, as well as independent tour guides.

Through open dialogue with Afro-Brazilians who play a significant role with Afro ethnic tourism, a central occurrence was highlighted. The use of Blackness, whether it is through self-identification or through acknowledgement of a shared African ancestry as a point of connection, helps to create relationships amongst Afro-Brazilians and African Americans. With vastly different opinions on the Brazilian government's respect for Afro-Brazilians culture, this chance to develop relationships makes Afro ethnic tourism a space for culture linkage and transfer of knowledge. There are impediments, like African Americans seeing Bahia through an American lens and the rewriting of historical facts to satisfy/replicate the African American experience. However, the cross-cultural pride of Blackness reveals how Bahia, as the preserver of African tradition, can offer opportunities to all people on both ends, especially the youth.

Overview of Afro Ethnic Tourism

Secretaria de Turismo do Estado da Bahia is the face of the governmental involvement within African ethnic tourism, as it advertises Bahia as the “terra de todos nós {land for all of us}.”¹ This sector, including Bahiatursa, encourages African ethnic tourism under the rationale of tourist development as well as an “instrument of reparation” that will “reinforce political and economic commitments to the communities of African descent.”² Leo, a Bahiatursa representative, explained that 2007 marked the creation of the Secretary of Tourism after dismembering the Secretary of Culture.³ This split was driven by the realization that Bahia received a lot of tourists for the purpose of culture. However, there needed to be a separate department to promote and to advertise Bahia to all tourists especially American tourists. From this, separate markets like the South American market and the English market were created to establish a direct connection between Bahia and the individual locations. Leo emphasized that for the American market, ethnic tourism is its legacy.⁴

To establish a frame to look at Afro ethnic tourism, it was essential to know the different terminologies as well as personal definitions that refer to this movement. Through the conduction of the research, Afro ethnic tourism was used interchangeably with five other words: African American tourism, Afro-centric tourism, African heritage tourism, cultural tourism, and, the most common, ethnic tourism. The definitions of Afro ethnic tourism varied from a market that brings persons from of Afro-descent to Bahia to using a determinate ethnic group to promote

¹ Secretariat of Tourism of the State of Bahia, *African Heritage Tourism in Bahia* (Salvador, 2009), 1.

² Ibid., 7.

³ Field Journal, page 27, Interview: April 30, 2013- Leo, Employee at Bahiatursa, Salvador, Bahia.

⁴ Ibid.

tourism.⁵ Despite the different self-definitions, most interviewees hinted to the existence of an exchange as the core of Afro ethnic tourism. The exchange was in reference to language, experiences, knowledge, and any other intellectual/physical material that both parties can swap. Most important, Afro ethnic tourism is grounded in African tradition; the tradition is inseparable from tourism.⁶

The presence of Afro ethnic tourism in Bahia presents both benefits and shortcomings for Afro-Brazilians. Afro ethnic tourism helped to create opportunities for Afro-Bahians that did not exist prior to this specific market. One interviewee described that Afro ethnic tourism was good because companies invest in people learning English in order to communicate with African American tourists.⁷ Tourism offers the chance to receive tourists who speak different languages, which encourages the spaces to learn more languages.⁸ In addition to language, Afro ethnic tourism created new jobs for Afro-Brazilians as well as opened up new job positions. Many years ago, it was common to see no Black people working in the Bahian hotels.⁹ As African American visitation to Bahia increased, they began to make demands to agencies for Black workers.¹⁰ Soon, the vast majority of hotels had Black men and women present at the front desk.¹¹ They were also able to obtain positions like evening manager and reception manager.¹² This also affected the tour guide business as more Black tour guides were hired to lead African American tourists.¹³ Tiago, as a tour guide, captured the sentiment of happiness when he exclaimed that “tourism is

⁵ Field Journal, page 46, Interview: May 8, 2013- Anonymous, Tour Guide, Salvador, Bahia.

⁶ Field Journal, page 23, Interview: April 29, 2013- Tiago, Tour Guide, Salvador, Bahia.

⁷ Field Journal, page 52, Interview: Anonymous.

⁸ Field Journal, page 30, Interview: Leo.

⁹ Field Journal, page 22, Interview: Tiago.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Field Journal, page 50, Interview: Anonymous.

¹² Ibid., 51.

¹³ Field Journal, page 22, Interview: Tiago.

my [his] love.”¹⁴ Jewelry stores followed in the same fashion upon the African American preference to buy from Afro-Brazilians.¹⁵ Travel agencies began to hire Afro-Brazilians.¹⁶ Economic wise, Afro ethnic tourism brings money to these spaces. It also brings new businesses like hotels, bars, and restaurants to a community.¹⁷

Even though there are several prospects, Afro ethnic tourism has some downfalls. The source of these downfalls is the opposition to the use of the Afro-Brazilian culture and lifestyle for the gains of a few. The opposition subsists because there is a conception that reparations are scarce, communication is minimal with the Brazilian government and Afro-Brazilian control within Afro ethnic tourism is rare. With a government and its affiliates that pride themselves on commercializing the Bahian product, it is easy to be upset with Afro ethnic tourism as it further creates distance between the government and Afro-Brazilians. Alberto touched on this idea saying that there is a weak relationship between Afro-Brazilians and the government because politics.¹⁸ The impact of this distance is increased as the government continues to treat Afro ethnic tourism as a market rather than the cultural joining of Afro descended people.¹⁹ As a result of the vast positives and negatives, there does not exist a definite admiration or aversion amongst the interviewees who shared their opinion on how Afro ethnic tourism interacts in their lives.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Field Journal, page 51, Interview: Anonymous.

¹⁶ Field Journal, page 4, Informal Conversation: April 28, 2013- Paula Santos, Interpreter, Salvador, Bahia.

¹⁷ Field Journal, page 57, Interview: May 9, 2013-Fernando, Administrator for Irmandade da Boa Morte, Cachoeira, Bahia.

¹⁸ Field Journal, page 42, Interview: May 6, 2013- Alberto, Director at Ilê Aiyê, Salvador, Bahia.

¹⁹ Field Journal, page 7, Feelings and Judgments: April 29, 2013.

Methodology

Salvador, Bahia as well as Cachoeira, Bahia served as the sites of conduction for the following Independent Study Project (ISP). The formal research period for this ISP lasted three weeks dating from April 29, 2013 until May 17, 2013. However, because the project was focused on ethnic tourism, I began observations and reflections on the first day of arrival to Bahia, which was April 14, 2013. Due to the complexity of my research question, which sought to look at ethnic tourism through the lens of Afro-Brazilians as well as the government of Bahia, my field sites varied on a weekly basis. Under the guidance of Paula Santos as my ISP advisor, I was able to map out a different schedule each week in order to have enough time to visit each space and communicate with individuals about their lives and opinions on ethnic tourism in their space/Salvador. My main field sites included Bahiatursa (located in Jardim Amapá), Casa da Irmandade da Boa Morte (located in Cachoeira) and Ilê Aiyê (located in Curuzo). The following sites were selected upon receiving commentary and advice from my advisor as well as local Bahians about locations that most African Americans visit upon arrival to Bahia. Initially, I intended to use the Museu Afro Brasileiro as a field site; however, through discussions with my advisor, I decided to not use this site. Although these three locations were the core sites for my research, participants in the study came from these sites as well as outside locations that intersect with ethnic tourism in Bahia.

Throughout the course of the research period, data was collected through various means. Upon initial contact within a space, observation was used in order to have a mental picture of the space especially because tourism is such a visual experience. Yet, the bulk of the data was collected through semi-structured, informal interviews in order to engage in dialogue with the individuals about their sentiments and opinion on ethnic tourism. Interviews were conducted in

both Portuguese and English. Study participants made this decision upon the commencement of the interviews. All interviews were recorded upon each participant's signed consent and oral confirmation. Hand-written notes, which participants were notified about in the beginning of interviews, were taken to compliment the recording as well as to assist with the language difference. All interviews were transcribed after conduction. For interviews conducted in Portuguese, parts used in this monograph have been translated into English. If a situation permitted, participant observation was employed to become more acquainted with the space like going to Ilê Aiyê for class with the students or simply sitting around the research location.

Nine interviews were conducted. Participants included two representatives from Bahiatursa, two autonomous tour guides, two directors at Ilê Aiyê, two Irmãs (Sisters) from Irmandade da Boa Morte, and an administrator for Irmandade da Boa Morte. I decided to include the tour guides into my research because it is one of the common positions held by Afro-Brazilians involved in ethnic tourism in Bahia. Therefore, I felt that this insight would be essential to get the viewpoint of independent workers whose profession weighs heavily on foreign visitation and interest to/in Bahia. All the interviews were geared towards creating dialogue on the four sections of my research question: (1) feelings about use of Afro Brazilian culture as the core of ethnic tourism, (2) opinions about the relationship between Afro-Brazilians and the government, (3) perceptions of African Americans/relationships between African Americans and Afro Brazilians, and (4) sentiments on ethnic tourism in Bahia in general.

Through conduction of the interviews, it became apparent that Afro roots tourism was not an actual term used. Rather, the term frequently used was ethnic tourism. To make reference to African American visitation specifically, the term ethnic tourism was still applicable. Therefore, my initial research question had to switch from the frame of Afro roots tourism to Afro ethnic

tourism. Afro roots tourism focuses heavily on the reasoning that African Americans come to Salvador. Scholar Patricia de Santana Pinho draws upon this movement as she defined roots tourism as visitation that is motivated by the desire to travel in search of elements to construct one's personal identity.²⁰ While this motivation may exist for African American tourists, it was not the terminology used within the various field spaces that I visited. I made the switch to Afro ethnic tourism which all of the study participants had heard of prior to the interview. Afro ethnic tourism was a more encompassing term. It incorporated all components of roots tourism. These components include: the reasons that people come to Bahia which includes for heritage/identity searching, the visitation of all foreigners especially African Americans, the relationships created from contact with foreigners and locals, and the government's involvement through promotion and funding.

Even though the project is centralized on the Afro Brazilian viewpoint of this global process, a part of the project incorporated analysis of my position because I occupied several of the identities at the core of my research. As an African American student, researcher, and tourist, I constantly questioned and reflected on how I fit with the model of African ethnic tourism to Bahia. By the end of my research period, I was able to formulate concrete conclusion on what this identity means and how I can use/change the discourse around being an African American tourists to focus on creating sustainable, interdependent relationships with the people that I have met on this journey.

²⁰ Patricia de Santana Pinho "African-American Roots Tourism in Brazil" in *Latin American Perspectives* 35.3 (2008), 72.

Background Research

“The Brazilian Northeast region, and especially Salvador da Bahia, became in the last decades a sort of happy Africa, an Africa that worked out, despite of the terrible crime on its origin- the slavery.”²¹

Tourism

Tourism can be thought of as a nexus of all the workings of a modern society: from politics to social relationships to economic gains. To the World Trade Organization (UNWTO) which promotes tourism as “responsible, sustainable, and universally accessible”, they also encourage tourism as a necessity in life because it affects the social, cultural, educational, and economic sectors.²² With Brazil’s groundbreaking tourist arrivals in Brazilian in 2011 with more than 5.4 million international visitors, it has become a defining feature of the Brazilian economy with both positive and negative effects on the Brazilian people and their society.²³

Brazil, and in particular Bahia, has been a site for a specific type of tourism that intertwines culture and education as a purpose for visitation: ethnic tourism (as it is commonly referred to). Defined formally as a mode of tourism that allows tourists to “create bonds with host communities, take part in traditional activities, observe and learn cultural expressions, lifestyles, and customs,” ethnic tourism strives to create connection through the differences between the host and the tourist.²⁴ That element of “difference” is used to generate income and foreign exchange within a host location.²⁵

²¹ José E. Agualusa, “A África Que Deu Certo.” in *Guias Unibanco Brasil Nordeste*, ed. Gilberto Sá. (São Paulo, 2006).

²² World Tourism Organization, “Article 5: Tourism, a Beneficial Activity for Host Countries and Communities” in *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism* (Santiago, Chile, 2001).

²³ World Tourism Organization, *Collection of Tourism Expenditures Statistics* (1995).

²⁴ Valene Smith, *Hosts and Guests Revisited: Tourism Issues of the 21st Century* (New York: Cognizant Communication, 2001).

²⁵ Philip F. Xie, *Authenticating Ethnic Tourism* (Channel View Publications, 2010).

Salvador, Bahia with 80% of its population of African descent, is a top location for Afro ethnic tourism. Afro ethnic tourism can formally be defined as movement or visitation of Afro descendant persons to locations crucial to one's ancestral roots or ethnic history. Due to Bahia's large Black population, there exists a major attraction for African American visitation. Although the basis of Afro ethnic tourism is to place African Americans in contact with the Bahian culture and people, there are historical issues with the idea of ethnic tourism that make the role of being an African American tourist questionable.

Folklorization of Black Culture and specifically Afro-Brazilian Culture

"When Black culture is reduced to 'a generating source of sensuality, a plethora of genital tricks, and an eternal fountain of recipes,'" this is "prejudice."²⁶ The process that Stam is referring is folklorization. Folklorization is used with words like primitivism and exoticism, which are driven by the desire to "re-enchant the world."²⁷ This enchanting comes at the expense of the Black bodies who must share, and/or alter their culture to entertain the tourist eye. In Salvador, the state used folklore as the national stamp. This use of culture as a symbol for the nation simultaneously led to political and economic profits.²⁸ In the late 1960's, the creation of the Centro Folclórico, a department of Salvador's municipal government with the city's tourist section, signified the shift of appreciation of culture into a commodity.²⁹ The sector, which purpose was to promote tourism as well as increase cultural knowledge, defined folklore as samba, Candomblé, capoeira, and maculelê.³⁰ All these elements were and are crucial to the

²⁶ Robert Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism: A Comparative History of Race in Brazilian Cinema and Culture* (Durham: Duke UP, 1997), 338.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Henry, Kraay, *Afro-Brazilian Culture and Politics: Bahia, 1790s to 1990s* (Armonk, 1998), 123.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

Afro-Brazilian people. This sector, and soon cultural exchange programs, began to capture the attention of many tourists like African Americans. Ethnic tourism (and Afro roots tourism) only grew with the UNESCO's announcement of Salvador as a Cultural World Heritage in 1985.³¹ This pressure caused the government in Salvador to take great measures to preserve and control the "national" tradition of Afro-Brazilian culture. Some of these measures include relocation people to recreate Pelorinho for festivals and the unauthorized recording of Bahian music for popular music.³² The Bahian government started to open up Afro-Brazilian cultural, religious, and social spaces to rest of the world.

History of Salvador and Afro-Brazilians (specifically Afro-Bahians)

Referring back to the UNWTO, tourism should "help to raise the standard of living...in the regions visited...[and] aim to integrate them" (2001). Yet, one must ask: how can Afro Brazilians in Salvador truly benefit in the midst of society that was built on their limited inclusion? Scholars have attempted to discover answers to this question and the conclusion is that the Afro-Bahian men, women, and children are workers of this industry but not the winners.

Considering race relations historically, the Black identity is a stigmatized and constraining position to occupy in Brazilian society. Usually, academics refer to the history of Afro Brazilians in four historical moments that showcase how Afro-Brazilians transitioned from exclusion to romantic aversion.³³ Salvador was the first colonial capital in Brazil founded in 1549.³⁴ Salvador was important to the economy of Brazil as it was built on the exportation of

³¹ Gloria, Lanci, "Cultural Identity and Tourism in Salvador: Building the City Image," *Vitruvis* (2011): 3.

³² Ibid.

³³ Michel Agier, "Racism, Culture and Black Identity in Brazil," *Bulletin of Latin American* 14.3 (1995): 252.

³⁴ Lanci, "Cultural Identity and Tourism in Salvador: Building the City Image," 3.

primary and manufactured good, mainly the sugar cane industry.³⁵ As economics grew, the social scene was characterized by extreme stratification with power centralized with landholders, merchants, government employees, and politicians.³⁶ This sector was formed by whites of European descent and a hint of mestizos who reached this position through “whitening” themselves.³⁷ Slaves were fundamental to the construction of Bahia’s history. Excluded from formal society, slaves suffered from low fecundity and high mortality.³⁸ Although slaves found outlets for resistance like negotiating work relations and organizing rebellions, their position depended on the degradation of African persons.³⁹ Next there existed a period of racialism, which further drew on the difference of Blacks in Brazilians. In order to create Brazilian identity, the Europeans needed to classify the social/cultural groups.⁴⁰ Along with this classification came the creation of stereotypes about the Blacks in Brazil. Some of these classifications included dirtiness, ugliness, coarseness, and irresponsibility.⁴¹ To further intensify the negative depictions, Brazilian encouraged a policy of whitening (branqueamento). During this time, the government encouraged European immigration to aim at the “extinction and dilution of the black ‘race.’”⁴² It also was the government’s attempt to make European culture become Brazilian culture.⁴³ Lastly, at the beginning of the 1930’s, Brazil began to promote the ideology of a racial democracy.⁴⁴

The promotion of this idea presented Brazil as a mixed front which race was mixed. Therefore, it

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Jefferson Bacelar, “Blacks in Salvador: Racial Paths,” in *Black Brazil: Culture, Identity, and Social Mobilization*, ed. Larry Crook, and Randal Johnson (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1999), 86.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Kraay, *Afro-Brazilian Culture and Politics*, 8.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Agier, “Racism, Culture and Black Identity in Brazil,” 249.

⁴¹ Ibid., 250.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Field Journal, page 49, Interview: Anonymous.

⁴⁴ Agier, “Racism, Culture and Black Identity in Brazil,” 250.

became unacceptable to speak about racism or racial prejudice in Brazil.⁴⁵ People like Diegues Júnior claimed that the reason for racial discrimination in Brazil was social class and not color.⁴⁶ The idea of racial democracy allowed the Brazilian government to ignore the social, economic, and political position of Afro-Brazilians. This circumstance fostered a different type of racism: institutionalized racism, which is the core of Brazil's institutions.⁴⁷ This framework was the perfect foundation for the Brazilian government to include Afro-Bahian into society as first a part of national identity and then through the commodification of their culture for tourists in the 1960s-1970s.⁴⁸

Spaces

Irmandade da Boa Morte: One of the oldest traditions in Bahia, the Irmandade da Boa Morte is the main attraction to Cachoeira. It is also the top reason African Americans visit Salvador. The Irmandade practice an infusion of Catholicism and Candomblé. The integration of Catholicism by their ancestors occurred many years ago to conceal the worshipping to the orixás, without fear of persecution.⁴⁹ From August 13-17th every year, the Festa da Boa Morte {*translation: The Good Death Festival*} occurs.⁵⁰ The women participate in a procession for “Good Death, or Dormitio Virginis, as the Assumption of the Virgin Mary to heaven.”⁵¹ The love for Boa Morte is not only global but also internally within the city of Cachoeira. Fernando shared how he does not know life without Irmandade da Boa Morte.⁵² Outside of Irmandade da Boa Morte, Cachoeira is a beautiful, relaxed city with natural scenery complemented by a “marvelous” river. The people

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Kraay, *Afro-Brazilian Culture and Politics*, 120.

⁴⁷ Antonio Cosmo Onawale, “História Africana da Bahia” (lecture, CEPAIA, April 17, 2013).

⁴⁸ Kraay, *Afro-Brazilian Culture and Politics*, 17.

⁴⁹ Bahia Tourism Information, *Bahia: A Maior Expressão da Cultura Afro no Brasil* (Salvador).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Field Journal, page 29, Interview: Leo.

are hospitable and have very large hearts.⁵³ Fernando believes that Cachoeira has the potential to be a major tourism site; hence, he exclaimed that it is the best place in the world.⁵⁴

Ilê Aiyê: Started in 1974, Ilê Aiyê is located in the community of Curuzo in Barrio Liberdade.

As the first bloco Afro, it is recognized for its ability to establish its own parameters especially in a country that historically tried to suppress and eradicate Blackness.⁵⁵ Ilê Aiyê, at its beginning, communicated the inequality of Blacks through a cultural revolution.⁵⁶ Alberto, a director at Ilê Aiyê, shared a brief history about the birth of this Black struggle but pride. He recounted that the president, Vovó, and his friends were dissatisfied with the racial conditions of society.⁵⁷ In particular, Blacks were excluded from Carnaval, which is a major event for Brazilians. From this, he had an idea to create a carnaval block that was different from any of the prior ones.⁵⁸ 39 years later, Ilê Aiyê has manifested into more than just a bloco afro. It works in several social projects like a school, Escola Mãe Hilda and Ilê Aiyê Vocational School. On a personal level, the personal attachment to Ilê Aiyê is powerful as Alberto described that it is his son.⁵⁹ In relation to tourism, Ilê Aiyê helps Afro ethnic tourism because it is a symbol of Salvador.⁶⁰ Alberto said that when people want to see a Black state, they come to Ilê Aiyê.⁶¹ Indeed a powerful and truthful statement, it practices sustainability through strengthening the community and taking the greatest pride in being negro/negra {*translation: Black*}.

⁵³ Field Journal, page 59, Interview: Fernando.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 3-4.

⁵⁵ Field Journal, page 48, Interview: Anonymous.

⁵⁶ Cosmo, “História Africana da Bahia” (lecture)

⁵⁷ Field Journal, page 38, Interview: May 6, 2013- Alberto, Director at Ilê Aiyê, Liberdade, Bahia.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Field Journal, page 43, Interview: Alberto.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 39.

⁶¹ Ibid.

For the Tourist Eye

An important part of the network created by Afro ethnic tourism is the tourist: in this case, the African American tourists. In order to understand the dynamic of Afro ethnic tourism in the lives of Afro-Brazilians, I partook in conversations with interviewees about their perceptions on the African American and the various roles we occupy during visitation to Salvador. After talking to Bahiatursa, it is true that there is a focus on African American tourism to Bahia. This is supported by the existence of an American market. African American tourists stay longer than other tourists by 2 to 4 days.⁶² During their stay, they “spend the most and leave the most to the city...they stay in nice hotels.”⁶³ The occupations of African American tourists vary from doctors to dancers to professors to researchers to students to nurses.⁶⁴ Also, a large portion of African American tourists are affiliated with church groups which often prompts the desire to visit the Irmandade da Boa Morte.⁶⁵ Outside of these technicalities, African Americans come to Salvador to know the whole story of the slave trade.⁶⁶ This results in a general interest to go outside of fancy resorts and visit communities like Liberdade and quilombos to really see how Blacks are living in Brazil.⁶⁷

Although the desire to learn may be genuine, problems do arise from the African American want to learn this history. Essentially, African Americans are misinformed when they come to Bahia.⁶⁸ Leo, an employee of Bahiatursa, said African Americans should study and read

⁶² Field Journal, page 46, Interview: Anonymous.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 52.

⁶⁵ Field Journal, page 4, Informal Conversation: Paula Santos.

⁶⁶ Field Journal, page 46, Interview: Anonymous.

⁶⁷ Field Journal, page 4, Informal Conversation: Paula Santos.

⁶⁸ Field Journal, page 28, Interview: Leo.

more about Brazil and the culture prior to their arrival.⁶⁹ Tiago quoted President Lula, as she told her opinion on American ways. “If Americans had a little bit of time, they would think about themselves. If they had more time, they would think about themselves and if they had even more time, they would think about themselves.”⁷⁰ The American occupation with the self rather than the world is not exempt from African Americans. As African Americans continue to be preoccupied with their personal ideals while visiting foreign locations, they arrive without proper or completely wrong information. The effect of this is cultural devastating because it creates a trend of rewriting history for the tourist eye. One participant spoke about a video called “Celebration of Life.” In the film, the producer tells viewers that Mercado Modelo was a major port of slave trade.⁷¹ The participant admitted that Mercado Modelo may have received slaves because the bay was a major port.⁷² However, Mercado Modelo was built after the abolishment of slave trade in Brazil so it is impossible that it could have been a major port.⁷³ Tourists go to the Mercado Modelo because the film advertises it as a major port of slave trade. The interviewee said that tourists get upset and believe that the tour guides do not know their history when they disprove the lies created about Mercado Modelo.⁷⁴ The premise of this lie was probably financial. It is then amplified with other tour guides who take tourists to the market to remember the location as a major hub. This creates a vicious cycle of lies just to satisfy the tourists’ desires.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Field Journal, page 25, Interview: Tiago.

⁷¹ Field Journal, page 51, Interview: Anonymous.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

The foundational problem of the rewriting of history is the American tendency to expect their experiences to be replicated wherever they go.⁷⁵ The interviewee described how it is American culture, which African Americans are not separate from, to believe that the existence of the US as a world power constitute the replication of the American experience. If this replication cannot occur, it is common for African American tourists to complain or critique the Brazilian models. Conversations with advisor, Paula Santos, revealed that American tourists often expect Brazilians to speak English. When African American tourists make the decision to visit locations central to the Diaspora, they often visit countries in Africa where English is spoken. They bring that same expectation to Brazil. However, the official language of Brazil is Portuguese due to Portugal's colonization of Brazil. Tiago offered a suggestion to African American tourist: learn more Portuguese.⁷⁶ This is a sensible suggestion because if you are visiting a location, you should, at least, know the language. "More Black Brazilians take English than African Americans take Portuguese. If they [African Americans] know a little bit of Portuguese, the relationships could be better."⁷⁷ Another example is the constant comparison of food service. As Americans, we are used to receiving our food in 30 minutes or less. However, the culture is different in Brazil. Meals are generally 2 hours or longer because individuals like to talk and eat. This becomes a site of complaint for African American tourists too.

To this issue, an interviewee explained that as tourist, we want to see another place and experience it but we go into the space "with our eyes, with our experience."⁷⁸ African Americans come with an African American eye.⁷⁹ This makes it difficult to step outside of our ways and

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Field Journal, page 25, Interview: Tiago.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Field Journal, page 51, Interview: Anonymous.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

truly appreciate the culture and history of the space that we are occupying. It is not easy to come into another space and stop judging based on your prior experiences. This form of objectivity with comprehension needs to be exercised because the essence of Afro ethnic tourism, or African heritage tourism as referred to by Bahiatursa, is to “experience firsthand the state’s deep African legacy in its most beautiful manifestations and in the daily lives of its people.”⁸⁰ This cannot happen if we do not relinquish our minds of our ideals in order to form a connection with the Afro-Bahian people.

Bahia as the Preserver

When you enter Salvador, you “breathe African culture.”⁸¹ The combination of the propaganda displaying the Black Baiana do Acarajé with the existence of the religion of Candomblé and Axé music affirms the presence of Africanness in Salvador.⁸² It is true that despite this being a reality, it is a statement that often turned into a visual experience for profit. Upon entering Bahiatursa, there are several photos of Black individuals. It is a point of sale that works for its targeted audience, African Americans. De Santana Pinho offers a critique on use of Bahia and its strong African presence for the African American desire. The scholar analyzes the inequalities that arise when persons who share Black ancestry come into contact through the dynamic of tourism, in particular Afro ethnic tourism (Important to note that De Sanatana Pinho refers to it as African roots tourism). Her analysis concludes that Afro ethnic tourism reenacts imperialism because (1) the gap between those who can travel and those who can not is widened, (2) African American gain the power to define what is “traditional” to/for all persons of Black ancestry, and lastly (3) African Americans obtain a higher ranking in the Black Atlantic

⁸⁰ Bahia Tourism Information, *Bahia: A Maior Expressão da Cultura Afro no Brasil* (Salvador).

⁸¹ Cosmo, “História Africana da Bahia” (lecture)

⁸² Secretariat of Tourism, *African Heritage Tourism in Bahia*, 82-83.

hierarchy.⁸³ As African Americans exert their power, they begin to create what De Santana Pinho refers to as the “map of Africanness.”⁸⁴ This map, which is solely created by African Americans, designates locations only in Africa and the African Diaspora responsible for aiding African Americans in their journey to gain a sense of Black identity.⁸⁵ Within this map, Egypt is demarcated as the “place of Black pride” and West-African countries like Ghana are the “place of origin.”⁸⁶ Most important, Brazil is considered the “place to find preserved tradition.”⁸⁷ To De Santana Pinho, this responsibility becomes the burden of the people, in this case Afro Brazilians, to recreate this notion.

Speaking to Afro-Brazilians, there is a common belief that Bahia is the location that preserved the African culture. Fernando shared his opinion that native Brazilians have persevered African culture through, first, Candomblé and then through music like samba de roda.⁸⁸ To him, this was monumental as he decided to start a band. In order to respect the tradition of his people preserving the African tradition, his band plays samba reggae that has beats from Africa.⁸⁹ In addition, the core of some of the field sites is Africanness. The Irmãs of Boa Morte were described as women that guard and protect the Afro descended culture of their mothers.⁹⁰ One of Ilê Aiyê’s main principal when it was being established in 1974 was to communicate the inequality of Blacks.⁹¹ They did so through a cultural revolution that displayed

⁸³ Patricia de Santana Pinho “African-American Roots Tourism in Brazil”, 70.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 75.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 76.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Field Journal, page 58, Interview: Fernando.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 57.

⁹¹ Cosmo, “História Africana da Bahia” (lecture)

the beauty and strength of the negro/negra.⁹² It is even evident through African heritage tours, which were created to show the African culture of Bahia to the world.⁹³ The points that are designated within these tours include the Baiana, Blocos Afros, gastronomy, capoeira, religious festivals like “Bembé do Mercado” in Santo Amaro, and the The Good Death Festival by the Irmandade da Boa Morte.⁹⁴ Each of these points reflects the African legacy brought with the slaves who arrived between the 16th to 19th centuries.⁹⁵ So whether it is a resurrection of African tradition or an infusion of African tradition with newer principles, it is clear that the culture of Bahia is African culture, especially in comparison to American culture.

This comparison of the presence of African tradition in the United States versus Brazil was raised during one of the interviews as the interlocutor explained what Blacks in the United States lack. The interlocutor explained that although Blacks in the United States have more political power than Blacks in Brazil, we, as African Americans, do not have many places where African American culture is dominant.⁹⁶ In relation to religion, there is strength in Black Christian churches but even the foundation of that religion rest in the hands of the English colonizers who forced Blacks to convert to Christianity.⁹⁷ Additionally, African American culture is seen in music too.⁹⁸ Outside of these spaces, the dominant culture does not reflect the African American traditions. In truth, it is difficult to see the African American culture because American culture is very powerful. A major feature of American culture, aside from consumerist ways, is the use of other cultures as its own. Although it may appear that African American

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Field Journal, page 61, Interview: May 16, 2013-Roberto, Employee at Bahiatursa, Salvador, Bahia.

⁹⁴ Bahia Tourism Information, *Bahia: A Maior Expressão da Cultura Afro no Brasil* (Salvador).

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Field Journal, page 47, Interview: Anonymous.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

culture is not dominant, it is intertwined within the larger American culture. However, due to the physical lack of African culture within American spaces, African Americans search for it. They find their answer in Bahia upon hearing or constructing the belief that Bahia is the preserver of African tradition. Reintegrating De Santana's Pinho with the opinions of the Afro-Brazilians in this study, the idea of the "map of Africanness" that acts as a burden to the people did not exist in the spaces I entered. This may have been the circumstance because many of the individuals took pride in the idea that Bahia as well as the Afro-Brazilian people have preserved and currently uses the African tradition. Therefore, it is not a burden to display a piece of their lifestyle that is integral to their existence, religion, occupations, or establishments.

The notion of the lack of "Africanidade" {*translation: Africannness*} in the United States acts as main pull for African American visitation to Bahia.⁹⁹ This rationale influences many of the reasons why African Americans deem it vital to visit Bahia. Interviews conveyed the reasons. One interlocutor gave a short history lesson about the increase of African American tourism to Bahia. For some African Americans, Bahia was the possibility to return to an Africa.¹⁰⁰ Professors and thinkers, who traveled to Bahia and spread the news upon their return to the United States, fortified this movement.¹⁰¹ Soon, African Americans expressed desires to come to find their culture and their roots.¹⁰² Others firmly believed that they can understand their own culture by knowing Bahia since it is important to the Diaspora of African people across the world.¹⁰³ Lastly, African Americans desire to visit a location with people who look like them.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Field Journal, page 4, Informal Conversation: Paula Santos.

¹⁰¹ Field Journal, page 61, Interview: Roberto.

¹⁰² Field Journal, page 58, Interview: Fernando.

¹⁰³ Field Journal, page 53, Interview: Anonymous.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Blackness as the Connection

With specific desires to rediscover or connect with one's African ancestry, it is important to see what occurs as African Americans interact with the Bahian culture and the Afro-Brazilians through the mode of Afro ethnic tourism. Before speaking about the positive aspects of this relationship, Tiago, an Afro-Brazilian tour guide who has been working since 2000, mentioned that there exist some African American visitors that come to Bahia for the women.¹⁰⁵ His reference is to sex tourism. However, Tiago explained that this is a small minority.¹⁰⁶ Apart from this interaction, when African Americans come to Bahia, they make it a personal agenda to engage with the Afro-Brazilians and their spaces. On this agenda, they express the desire to help the community. The desire to help does not derive from the host-tourist dynamic, which seeks to perpetuate a hierarchy. There was no mention from the study participants of African Americans feeling pity or seeing Afro-Brazilians as victims. Rather, African Americans have a genuine desire to keep the money from Afro ethnic tourism within the Black communities as Tiago explained.¹⁰⁷ "They like to spend money to buy a painting in a shop owned by a Black person. They liked to go a restaurant owned by a Black... This is how the money stays in the community. This is important... a very important thing about African-Americans."¹⁰⁸ For the tour guide aspect, one guide expressed interest in having African American clients opposed to other races because African Americans had an interest in knowing and visiting spaces with African Brazilians.¹⁰⁹ By engaging in dialogue with study participants, we derived that this sentiment of help from both ends rose from a common link: Blackness.

¹⁰⁵ Field Journal, page 26 Interview: Tiago.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 23.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Field Journal, page 4, Informal Conversation: Paula Santos.

While speaking to Alberto about his opinion on the importance of Black people to visit Salvador and Ilê Aiyê, he said a line that made me realize how solidarity is created through Afro ethnic tourism. Alberto said that Black people need to come to see “*nossa cultura*” {*translation: our culture*}.¹¹⁰ I began to understand that Blackness is the universal link that connects Afro descended people in spite of the geographic difference. Symbols of Blackness like President Barack Obama serve as monumental moments in the lives of African Americans and even Afro-Brazilians as Alberto expressed.¹¹¹ While a few may see this link as divisive to construct a human family, I think it critical to the development of self-love and appreciation within the Black family. We are able to identify with each other because the initial suffering and the later resistance of Blacks are the same despite having different colonizers and trajectories.¹¹² At the base of this connection is the universal desire of “Re-Africanizing” one’s self despite being American, Brazilian, Argentine, or other locations that Blacks are present.¹¹³ To Professor Antônio Cosma Lima da Silva, this was the process of becoming/see himself a true person.¹¹⁴

In many of my interviews, I had a discussion with the interviewee about Blackness and pride of having African ancestry. Personally, this was the main learning point for me. This was when I could begin to see myself as a complete person upon recognizing the beauty and strength of being Black. When I first came to Salvador, a man selling food on the street told me that I should take pride in being called “morena.” To him, being called “negra” would increase the chances of being discriminated. During several of my meetings with interviewees, I spoke to them about this and began to fortify my feelings on being called “negra.” I think there is value in

¹¹⁰ Field Journal, page 42, Interview: May 6, 2013- Alberto, Director at Ilê Aiyê, Liberade, Bahia.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 40.

¹¹² Field Journal, page 29, Interview: Leo

¹¹³ Cosmo, “História Africana da Bahia” (lecture).

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

identifying with the discrimination because this touches on the incessant battle that Blacks have been in since the existence of the countries we occupy. I, as an African American woman, identify with the struggle because it exemplifies the strength of Black people. While speaking to an interviewee that chose to remain anonymous, we discussed how my perception can be offensive to some individuals in Brazil. Considering Brazil's trajectory of implementing framework like whitening policies and the racial democracy, there is a rationale behind the dislike of the word and presence of "negro." When I, as an African American, communicate my preference, it can be interpreted as ignorance. However, being in a space like Ilê Aiyê, I could not help but love my Blackness. In the end, "eu sou Africano" {*translation: I am African*}.¹¹⁵ This link is strong enough for me to form bonds with others and to develop my identity as a creative, knowledgeable human being.

Respect

Respect is rooted in appreciation and understanding. Considering that the Afro-Brazilian culture and religion are the main markers for Afro ethnic tourism, respect for all their cultural markers should be the principal elements. However, through observation and conversations with Afro-Brazilians and their spaces, the viewpoints on the presence of respect, especially from the Brazilian government, reflected a dual opinion that contrasted greatly.

For some, respect, in relation to the Brazilian government, is portrayed through the support and physical actions that show care for the Afro-Bahian spaces designated for Afro ethnic tourism. When I spoke to the Elisabete, a irmã {*translation: sister*} of Irmandade da Boa Morte, she explicitly stated that that inclusion of the Afro-Brazilian culture in ethnic tourism is

¹¹⁵ Field Journal, page 40, Interview: Alberto

beautiful because Afro-Brazilians have a culture to share.¹¹⁶ She followed this opinion verifying that when African American tourists come for the annual Festa da Boa Morte or just to visit, they have profound respect.¹¹⁷ In relation to the Brazilian government and their relationship with Boa Morte, they have a strong participation especially through the monetary aid that they provide to fund the Festa in August.¹¹⁸ The government also is paying for the reconstruction of the house of Boa Morte.¹¹⁹ In addition to helping for the Festa, the government was involved in paying for the lights, water, and general maintenance of the house for the Irmãs according to Fernando who is the administrator for Irmandade da Boa Morte. The Brazilian government is also working with Boa Morte to make the house for the Irmãs into a cultural center.¹²⁰ This project will require the construction of new facilities like a public bathroom and an elevator.¹²¹ Irmandade da Boa Morte and its affiliates conveyed many ways that the government was involved; hence, there existed a general consensus that their relationship with the government was good.¹²² Through such involvement, they presented the Brazilian government in a positive light, which conveyed that respect was present. Many of the governmental actions that the individuals in Cachoeira, who were associated Boa Morte, referred to were the same actions that Bahiaturisa said it makes. While speaking to Leo, he explained the role that Bahiaturisa occupies when dealing with spaces related to ethnic tourism. He said that Bahiaturisa helps financially especially with events like the Festa da Boa Morte, which is extremely expensive.¹²³ In addition to monetary aid, Bahiaturisa

¹¹⁶ (Field Journal, page 36, Interview: May 2, 2013- Elisabete, Irmã da Boa Morte, Cachoeira, Bahia.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Field Journal, page 58, Interview: Fernando

¹¹⁹ Field Journal, page 16, Observation: May 9, 2013, Cachoeira, Bahia.

¹²⁰ Field Journal, page 57, Interview: Fernando.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Field Journal, page 32, Interview: Maria

¹²³ Field Journal, page 31, Interview: Leo.

helps with infrastructure, medical supplies, or any of the desires of the particular space.¹²⁴

Looking at Boa Morte's experience with the Brazilian government, respect is characterized by an active giving which is translated as understanding the importance of the physical space to the Afro-Brazilians and the African American tourists.

On the contrary, there is a different sentiment in which the government is cited as a perpetrator of the Afro ethnic tourism. The root of this opinion derives from the belief that "they [the Brazilian government and tourism office] are just selling the culture to make profit."¹²⁵ In the eyes of some individuals, only a few receive this profit. This notion is particularly upsetting when one considers Alberto's reflection. He explained that he was sad because Whites and the government control ethnic tourism despite the reality that Black do all work.¹²⁶ Analyzing Alberto's reflection, one can begin to see the social hierarchy that color creates within Salvador. An interviewee who desired to remain anonymous asserted that the Brazilian government cannot have much respect for Afro-Brazilians if Afro-Brazilians still do not have political or economic leadership.¹²⁷ The idea that Afro-Brazilians can occupy the lowest rank of the social strata but still be vital to a major portion of the economy seems unthinkable. However, to some participants, this is the reality. As a result, some can truly believe that "tourism---any business within this system---[wants] to sell a package that [can sell] the most. I think that they [Brazilian government] found that this [Afro-Brazilian] is one aspect that sells."¹²⁸

Going deeper into this sentiment of disrespect or minimal respect, it becomes even more intense when discussing the Candomblé. In regards to tour guides, disrespected is exhibited when there

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Field Journal, page 24, Interview: Tiago.

¹²⁶ Field Journal, page 40, Interview: Alberto.

¹²⁷ Field Journal, page 47, Interview: Anonymous

¹²⁸ Ibid.

is a lack of communication between the guide and the space. Tiago said that some tour guides send their clients to temples of Candomblé without speaking to the leader of the space.¹²⁹ This present conflicts because there have been instances in which tours have arrived on days when there is a private ceremony in a small space that can not hold all the visitors.¹³⁰ In this instance, the lack of communication displays how guides only see the temples as sites to make money rather than actual spaces in which traditional religion is practiced. Paula Santos spoke about tour agencies selling offerings to orixás.¹³¹ She said that the problem was not the offering but, it was the manner in which the offering was conducted. The relevance or importance of the action was absence from the tour. Agencies would have people dressed as orixás simply to do the offering. This example displays how guides do not take Candomblé seriously and only see it as a source to make money by fulfilling the tourists' crave for enchantment. In addition to tour guides, folkloric shows produce the same disrespect. One of the interlocutors spoke about a religious leader who speaks publically against the integration of the orixá dances within the shows.¹³² The interlocutor continued saying that the choreographers claim they are promoting the dance; truthfully, they are "mimicking the dance."¹³³ Upon "mimicking", they, then, share the dances with foreigners all over the world. Alberto, from Ilê Aiyê, affirmed this circumstance by describing how the government incentivizes folkloric shows with people who dress like the orixás.¹³⁴ Another example of the orixás being used as a point of sale was at the Rocking Rio Café located near the Convention Center in Salvador.¹³⁵ The participant recounted how many travel agents sent people

¹²⁹ Field Journal, page 24, Interview: Tiago

¹³⁰ Field Journal, page 4, Informal Conversation: Paula Santos.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Field Journal, page 47, Interview: Anonymous.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Field Journal, page 42, Interview: Alberto.

¹³⁵ Field Journal, page 52, Interview: Anonymous.

to this particular café because the workers dressed like the orixás.¹³⁶ The study participant asked the workers why they decided to dress in that fashion and, they said that an individual in the Tourism Bureau suggested the change to attract more people to the restaurant.¹³⁷

About Our Youth

Often within discussions about global trades and networks that affect the masses, there is one very important group of humans who are forgotten: the youth. This may happen because there is a tendency to believe that these global trades like tourism solely concern adults. While it is true that adults are the ones making the decisions in the governments as well as holding the majority of the positions created through Afro ethnic tourism, the youth are vital to Afro ethnic tourism in Salvador. The youth are critical to tourism because they also come into contact with tourists, and can feel the impact of tourists coming into their spaces (schools, jobs, or homes). The participants from Ilê Aiyê emphasized how the youth interact with Afro ethnic tourism in their personal space. Marcos, while explaining his definition of ethnic tourism, stated that a major element of this tourism is the cultural exchange between the Black youth in Liberdade and the Black youth from the United States.¹³⁸ He specifically made reference to Black youth in Boston because that is the next group of students that he will be receiving at Ilê Aiyê. He highlighted that this exchange happens on both ends. When the students from the United States come, they partake in cultural/educational courses on dance, percussion, and formation with the students of Ilê Aiyê.¹³⁹ The students of Ilê Aiyê can engage in dialogue with American students about the

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Field Journal, page 43, Interview: May 6, 2013- Marcos, Director at Ilê Aiyê, Liberdade, Bahia.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 44.

history of their lives.¹⁴⁰ This dialogue can even extend to discussion about music or politics in each individual's respective country/state/community.¹⁴¹ Also, the difference of language serves as a point of exchange for students. Alberto described his like for African American students coming because the students of Ilê Aiyê were able to encounter other students who spoke English.¹⁴² This gives the students the opportunity to exercise their English skills and instills an interest to learn more English so they have the chance to understand American visitors.¹⁴³ Also, for American students learning Portuguese, the immersion around Brazilian students speaking Portuguese helps to understand the language and to learn specific terminology to the local community. The interaction amongst the students, at Ilê Aiyê and possibly other spaces, reflects how Afro ethnic tourism gives the youth a chance to exchange and form bonds despite cultural difference.

Outside of Ilê Aiyê, there exists other opportunities created for the youth by Afro ethnic tourism. Afro ethnic tourism offers the chance to do research for Black American youth as both Marcos and Fernando explained. When American students do their research, they get to eat, live, sleep and meet individuals in the space.¹⁴⁴ Through this interaction, students become apart of the community.¹⁴⁵ On the other end, when African Americans come, they help to create programs to help Afro Brazilians. One of the programs in particular for the Black youth in Brazil is a scholarship program.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Field Journal, page 40, Interview: Alberto.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Field Journal, page 44, Interview: Marcos.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Field Journal, page 29, Interview: Leo.

Despite the formalness of tourism as a major network that may make it difficult to establish real connections amongst human beings, the Black youth of America and Brazil represent a group that use Afro ethnic tourism as a way to learn, communicate and grow. This is important because many study participants expressed a desire for ethnic tourism to grow within Bahia. Since, the youth are the ones learning to be the leaders of the future, their opinion and experience with Afro ethnic tourism is valuable because it will influence their decision on the potential of Afro ethnic tourism.

Solutions

The perception of Afro ethnic tourism is double-sided with some people expressing admiration for its ability to develop Bahia and others feeling that it is another reflection of the government's disrespect for the Afro-Brazilian people and their culture. Despite the varying views on Afro ethnic tourism, study participants provided critiques and solutions that can hopefully make this global network more inclusive and beneficial to Bahia and its people. Maria believes that tourism needs to develop.¹⁴⁷ This process of development extends further than simply building new infrastructure for tourists or creating more small business to sell cultural items. Development starts with the mode of thinking. One interlocutor explained that Salvador is not a Black city because the population is mostly Black, it is a Black city because "the African people built it."¹⁴⁸ "It is built by the African knowledge. There is African knowledge in everything we have."¹⁴⁹ The Brazilian government must accept and understand this truth in order to create a better Afro ethnic tourism that can benefit the foreigners and the locals. In addition to the government, workers within the Afro ethnic sectors like tour guides should gain this

¹⁴⁷ Field Journal, page 33, Interview: Maria.

¹⁴⁸ Field Journal, page 56, Interview: Anonymous

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

knowledge too. Tiago discussed how many tour guides do not know the African traditions, history, or religion.¹⁵⁰ Working for 14 years, he said that he could only recall 5 Black tour guides and 2 or 3 White tour guides who knew a little bit about this vital knowledge.¹⁵¹ Next, there needs to be a focus on developing the relationship that the Brazilian government has with its residents.¹⁵² “Tourism cannot be better if the city is not good for all its residents.”¹⁵³ One way that this relationship can become better is through communication on the importance of tourism to the Brazil and within the specific places marked as major tourists locations. During on the interviews, a participant mentioned a form of tourism that sounds similar to this suggestion. It was called community tourism, in which the people within the communities suggest what they believe is important to see upon visitation to their community. In this way, there is open communication with the people and the government about why people should come and what the agenda will be when tourists come to visit. Additionally, if a community does not want to be apart of this, they can communicate this. Advisor, Paula Santos, also made reference to community based tourism in a quilombo community called Rota da Liberdade.¹⁵⁴ The community based heritage tourism in the community was started by the leaders of the community who believed that they could show their customs and traditions to aid in the economic development of the community.¹⁵⁵ Upon making that decision, they received help from the Brazilian government to support the growth of their self-created tourism.¹⁵⁶ Most important, the proceeds of the tourism stay within the community, which is often a contentious

¹⁵⁰ Field Journal, page 22, Interview: Tiago

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Field Journal, page 59, Interview: Fernando.

¹⁵³ Field Journal, page 56, Interview: Anonymous.

¹⁵⁴ Field Journal, page 4, Informal Conversation: Paula Santos.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

part of Afro ethnic tourism. The Afro-Brazilian population is 85% of the Bahian population but constitute the largest part of the poor population.¹⁵⁷ “Money that is generated [from ethnic tourism] goes to the already wealthy...people who are not concerned with preserving culture and well organizing and supporting cultural projects.”¹⁵⁸ There needs to be better distribution of resources made from ethnic tourism.¹⁵⁹ This interviewee spoke about carnaval being a perfect portrayal of what occurs with money distribution from tourism. The carnaval locations are sold to private spaces and the same groups get most of the money.¹⁶⁰ Afro Blocos get very little money, which is ironic because these groups are one of the main faucets of the Afro ethnic tourism agenda.¹⁶¹ When I questioned two participants about reading literature that conveyed the government’s use of Afro-Brazilian culture and the lack of rightful repayment, the two finished my statement. This points to the commonness and truth of this statement, in relation to their experiences. When tourism becomes better for its citizens, it can be better for tourists as well. “You [as the tourist] are not threatened if the social disparities are so big... It is going to be safer...[and] to be more pleasant.”¹⁶²

Conclusion

Afro ethnic tourism is a large network that ties together many types of people from Afro-Brazilian vendors to African American agents to Afro Caribbean tourists. It is a major project that zones in on the relationship between persons in Africa and the African diaspora. It works to establish bonds between these persons. There are risks in developing relationships with people

¹⁵⁷ Field Journal, page 56, Interview: Anonymous.

¹⁵⁸ Deiuwertje de Beer, “The Influence of Contemporary Ethnic Tourism on Identity Construction and Cultural Expressions of Afro-Brazilians in Salvador” (Master diss., Universiteit Utrecht, 2009/2010), 44.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Field Journal, page 56, Interview: Anonymous.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

who share the same ancestral roots but have cultivated themselves in different locations with different histories. Possibilities of replicating imperialistic ways can occur; for example, African Americans making demands that Brazilians must comply to or the increasing pressure to learn English to satisfy the replication of the American experience. However, within the lives of the individuals in this study, each found ways to combat the implementation of a hierarchy. Rather, in their individual spaces, they grow internally and then, African American tourists watch the learning process. This is opposed to relying on African American visitation to create spaces for Afro-Brazilians to practice and live their cultural traditions.

In spite of some of the dissent relative to the Brazilian government, major companies like Bahiatursa do provide help to a myriad of locations that are critical points in Bahiatursa. From large attractions like Irmandade da Boa Morte to small cities, Bahiatursa and its workers strive to sell Bahia because they believe that preservation of African tradition is something to show the entire world. Fernando stressed that the Irmãs da Boa Morte have a force and bring an energy that needs to be seen.¹⁶³ This feeling extends further to the participants who all agreed that tourists, in particular African American tourists, should visit Bahia. There is a lot of space for improvement so that Afro ethnic tourism can really be for the people who create it. This improvement can come through communication of community needs, discussion that encourages critiques, and recognition of all spaces as important because the African essence is grounded in the historical foundation of Bahia.

As African Americans, we have a responsibility. Although interviewees like Marcos expressed delight when African Americans visited, we need to make an effort to learn more about Afro-Brazilians through readings, lectures, and dialogue. By becoming acquainted, we

¹⁶³ Field Journal, page 59, Interview: Fernando

express interest and develop new ways of thinking. Most important, we need to learn Portuguese. Language can be a detriment to relationship formation if there is lapse in understanding. As we travel to Bahia, we should comprehend that the official language is Portuguese. Therefore, we need to try or actually learn the language to portray that we respect the different historical trajectory. Also, learning the language translates the message that we want to talk and develop closeness with the people we meet. As we make these changes, we increase the chance to bond over commonality like Blackness and African ancestry and to appreciate differences like social hierarchies in America and in Brazil. If the end goal of Afro ethnic tourism is to create a space for sharing the Afro-Brazilian culture, we have a duty to let our counterparts know that we want to share, learn, and grow collectively. This can actually help to make the world seem smaller and more attainable to create long lasting, thriving relationships with people all over the world.

Vocabulary

Baiana do Acarajé- a matriarch dressed in white, customary traditional who sells local food which is “a synthesis of all that is African”)¹⁶⁴

Mercado Modelo- One of Salvador’s top attractions. It is “Salvador’s most traditional craft market.” Craft items sold there include, but are not limited to, wood carvings, hand-woven baskets, necklaces associated with Candomblé and leather.¹⁶⁵

Orixá- African deities in Candomblé

¹⁶⁴ Secretariat of Tourism, *African Heritage Tourism in Bahia*, 83.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 86.

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ISP Appendix

My original topic shifted a little bit because I was initially was set on talking to people about Afro roots tourism. Through conduction of interviews, I wanted to unpack Afro roots tourism as more than an economic device for the Bahian government and people. However, after the first interview, I realized that people used the term ethnic tourism and then, made reference to the African American market or African American tourists. Also, Afro roots tourism would require me to talk to African Americans about the reasons they come and how that may replicate the negative aspects of the tourist-host relationship. It was very easy to make the switch because I did a lot of research on ethnic tourism because Afro roots tourism is not that common with literature. Even through switching to ethnic tourism, I was still able to exchange knowledge on my main research questions: How does Afro roots tourism affect the “social” for Afro-Brazilians?

My advisor, Paula Santos, as well as Bill Calhoun helped me with making initial contact with spaces that African Americans visit as well as Bahiatursa, which reflected the governmental perspective of ethnic tourism in Bahia. For publications, I use library resources from the library located at IBEU as well as Internet resources. My advisor made my whole project possible because she has an incredible amount of knowledge on ethnic tourism based on her prior experience as a tour guide as well as her current position as an interpreter. She always made both herself and her home available for me. She always offered an honest, critical perspective of anything that I asked. Our discussions always raised larger questions for me. She also helped me make contact with all of my spaces. It was the best advisor I have had in my life.

For my project, most of the data was collected through semi-structured informal interviews in which I had a guide of questions written in both English and Portuguese. This was my main research method because it allowed me to record as well as engage in dialogue with my interlocutors about the subject matter. Also, it created a space in which they could ask me questions and the interview operated as a conversation opposed to a formal question and answer session. I also did observation, which was crucial because a major part of the tourist experience is visual. Therefore, to place myself in the position of the African American tourist, I took not of scenery a lot. Whenever I could, I engaged in participant observation. Most of my spaces did not offer this chance but, I tried to make myself less of a researcher and more of student who was open to learning. The final monograph is 85% primary data and 15% secondary sources. A

portion of the project could have been performed in the USA because I focused on ethnic tourism. However, I stuck closely to the ethnic tourism that brought African Americans to Bahia and the placement of Afro Brazilians within this global network. However, I needed to be in Bahia in order to get the sentiments of Afro-Brazilians who work within/spaces have been necessary within the ethnic tourism framework. Being able to talk to individuals within Boa Morte and Ilê Aiyê, which are two places frequently advertised for African Americans to visit, could only be exercised here in Bahia.

When I entered some of my field sites, I immediately felt welcomed and was always invited back into the spaces that I entered. This made me feel more integrated into the community. The ISP period pushed me to learn now Portuguese and to interact with Brazilians more fluidly. Due to this, I feel more adjusted to the culture because I am more comfortable with speaking to Brazilians in their language. In addition, I was able to begin to truly understand appreciation for African tradition and culture through the conduction of my ISP. Also, the differences between Afro Brazilian culture and African American culture became more apparent. This was critical for me because, even though we share a similar African ancestry, the development of our culture and the histories (colonization, Black movements) that influence our cultural development varies. I respect both. In accordance to the ISP process, my learning style has changed mainly because I can now speak in a different language. Additionally, I have further improved my ethnographic skills. This includes analyzing data from interviews, conducting interviews, and assuring that I comply with my ethnical responsibilities. As an Anthropology major, this style of learning is encouraged and therefore, I have done ethnographies like this project before. However, this was the first time conducting a project in a different language as well as going to multiple field sites for data collection. I have been able to improve my ability to communicate with people from religious, governmental, and social settings.

The assignments prior to the ISP helped tremendously especially data analysis and the interview assignment. Prior to the coming to Brazil, whenever I had to conduct interviews, I would be extremely nervous and uncomfortable. Having to conduct 3 interviews in Portuguese prior to my actual ISP made me much more comfortable with interacting, telling people to speak slower, and remaining engaged despite language differences. The data analysis assignment helped me figure out ways to compile loads of information into a concise piece that conveys the important information with the data. Prior to the conduction of the interviews, I created super

codes that correlated to the different sections in my original research questions. Any information that correlated to the super codes was highlighted in different colors. Then, I read through each highlighted quote and began to group together information based on repetition, my/the participant's reaction (for example: very adamant), or key words that were directly in my question. After, I rewrote all that data into groups in a notebook and created smaller subsets that would allow me to have a good flow for the data. That is how I used the relevant information. Also on an individual basis, I read through each interview and wrote a general account of the information that I knew I would want to use so every person's commentary would be included.

This was a very large-scale project. I constantly felt like I took on a lot because I needed so many perspectives to make sure I was not creating false information or producing assumptions. If you want to do this project, pick one space as well as the government and really try to drill to the core. You could even just choose to do the government because there is a story there. The flipside is to make the narrative complete and to add the African American perspective. There were many instances in which I felt like I needed their perspective to see if there was a lapse. I think it is important to get their perspective to at least know why Bahia is important and how they feel their presence is portrayed and received while in Bahia. However, I actually want to continue the project. If I had more time, I would be able to spend a sufficient amount of time with each space so that I could really see how Afro Brazilians interact with African Americans or to see how visible/active government is within each space. I am trying to find a way to get a grant and come back to finish my research. I could do the African American portion at home as well as here with African American tourists.